

Remarks

Claims 1-37 are pending. Claims 23-37 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 10-22 are allowed. Claims 1, 2, and 6 stand rejected. Claims 3-5 and 7-9 are objected to. Claim 1 is amended herein. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and request allowance of claims 1-22.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 10-22. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowability of claims 3-5 and 7-9.

Claims 1-2 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 3,199,138 (Nordeen). Inasmuch as the rejection applies to the claims as amended, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Independent claim 1 requires a baseplate affixed to the chassis and including a vacuum intake nozzle and an access aperture formed in the baseplate, wherein the access aperture extends at least partially over the inlet housing and wherein an outer portion of the inlet housing can be accessed through the access aperture. Advantageously, in some embodiments the access aperture is of a size and shape to allow the inlet housing to be removed from the chassis (see page 5, lines 3-7 of the application). Another advantage is that the access aperture can be of a size and shape to further allow removal of the impeller of the vacuum cleaner fan unit.

Nordeen does not disclose a vacuum intake nozzle and access aperture both formed in a baseplate. Nordeen does not disclose an access aperture that enables an outer portion of an inlet housing to be accessed through the access aperture.

In contrast, Nordeen discloses a cover plate 40 (see FIG. 2) that extends over an air passage 20 (see FIG. 3). Nordeen discloses that the cover plate 40 is cut out for the brush 14 (*i.e.*, the cut away 45) and is further cut out (*i.e.*, the cut away 46) for the bottom of the blower housing portion 34 (see col. 2, lines 35-39 and see FIGS. 3-4). However, Nordeen does not disclose a cut out for accessing an outer portion of the air passage 20. The cover plate 20 must be removed to access the air passage 20 and the blower 22 (see FIG. 4 and see col. 1, lines 33-34).

Independent claim 1 therefore includes features that are neither taught nor suggested by Nordeen. Claims 2 and 6 are allowable for the same reasons as claim 1.

The amendment to claim 1 further defines the subject matter. The amendment is fully supported by the specification and drawings (for example, see the vacuum intake nozzle shown in FIGS. 1 and 9) and no new matter is added. The specification describes and shows removal of the inlet housing 3 from the vacuum cleaner, which requires access to the outer portion (see page 4, lines 14-21 and see page 5, lines 1-11). A new search will not be required. Therefore, Applicants request that the amendment be entered and request the allowance of claims 1-22.

Please feel free to call me to discuss the patentability of the pending claims.

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